

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 EB-07 INR-07 A-01 SCA-01

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TO USDOC PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY ABUDHABI
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
US MISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 USINT BAGHDAD 0959/01

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BTRA, IZ
SUBJECT: 1976 TRADE MISSIONS: (II) PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS OF
USINT SUPPORT

REF: A) BAGHDAD 471; B) BAGHDAD 951; C) BAGHDAD 956

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE (SECOND IN A SERIES OF THREE) DESCRIBES PROBLEMS ANY TRADE MISSION TO IRAQ IN EARLY 1976 WILL FACE. IT DESCRIBES FACTORS LIMITING NATURE AND DEGREE OF SUPPORT USINT CAN GIVE MISSIONS, STATES ACTIONS WE WILL PERFORM AND IDENTIFIES ACTIONS WHICH MISSIONS MUST PERFORM TO MAKE OUR BACK-STOPPING EFFECTIVE. ACTION REQUESTED: USDOC SUPPORT DOCTRINE OF THIS MESSAGE IN DEALING WITH MISSIONS SEEKING IOGA STATUS.
END SUMMARY.

2. THIS IS SECOND MESSAGE OF THREE PART SERIES AND BECAUSE OF ITS LENGTH IS TRANSMITTED IN TWO SECTIONS. FIRST MESSAGE
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(REF C) IDENTIFIED SEVEN TRADE MISSIONS THINKING OF VISITING

IRAQ JANUARY - MAY 1976. THIS MESSAGE DESCRIBES BOTH DIFFICULTIES THEY WILL FACE AND FACTORS LIMITING USINT SUPPORT. THE FINAL MESSAGE COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL MISSIONS. OUR PROPOSALS ARE BASED ON EXPERIENCE WITH SUCCESSFUL MISSISSIPPI STATE MISSIONS IN APRIL 1975 LED BY GOVERNOR WILLIAM WALLER. MESSAGE IS SUITABLE FOR DIRECT TRANSMITTAL TO MISSION MEMBERS.

PROBLEMS FACED BY INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSMEN

3. TRADE MISSIONS FACE PROBLEMS IN IRAQ THAT ARE ALMOST UNIQUE BY COMPARISON WITH SOME OTHER NEARBY POSTS. MOST OF THESE PROBLEMS ARE THOSE FACING ANY BUSINESSMAN VISITING IRAQ FOR THE FIRST TIME:

- A) GENERAL PRELIMINARY GRASP OF COUNTRY AND MARKETING SYSTEM
- B) IDENTIFICATION OF CUSTOMERS
- C) MAKING APPOINTMENTS
- D) GETTING A VISA
- E) FINDING AND CONFIRMING HOTEL SPACE
- F) GETTING THROUGH AIRPORT FORMALITIES AND FROM AIRPORT TO HOTEL
- G) TRAVELING TO APPOINTMENT
- H) RECOGNIZING PLACE OF APPOINTMENT (ALMOST ALL SIGNS IN ARABIC)
- I) MEETING SELECTING SUITABLE PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES
- J) NAILING DOWN ONWARD TRANSPORTATION TO NEXT PORT OF CALL.

4. IN REGARD TO THE ABOVE (A) USDOC NOW HAS ADEQUATE WRITTEN INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL ON IRAQ. (B) MOST IRAQI END-USERS AND "OFFICIAL" MIDDLE-MEN ARE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND ARE ADEQUATELY IDENTIFIED IN USDOC MATERIALS. BUT (C) MAKING A CONFIRMED APPOINTMENT WITH A GOVERNMENT CUSTOMER OR MIDDLEMAN PRIOR TO ACTUAL ARRIVAL IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. MOST GOVERNMENT OFFICES HAVE A TERRIBLE RECORD ON ANSWERING UNSOLICITED CORRESPONDENCE. APPOINTMENTS MUST, THEREFORE, BE MADE AFTER ARRIVAL. IN PRACTICE THIS WORKS WELL. IF AN IRAQI OFFICIAL IS FREE, HE WILL SEE AN AMERICAN WITHOUT DELAY. IF HE IS NOT FREE, HE WILL DEPUTE SOMEONE ADEQUATE TO THE MATTER AT HAND. (D) VISAS ARE NO LONGER AS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AS THEY WERE EVEN THREE UNCLASSIFIED

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MONTHS AGO. (E) THE HOTEL SITUATION IN BAGHDAD IS BAD BUT NOT HOPELESS. FACILITIES ARE ABOUT ON A PAR WITH THOSE OF A GOOD YMCA IN THE STATES. HOTEL SPACE CAN ONLY BE CONFIRMED THROUGH A GOOD TRAVEL AGENT SUCH AS THOMAS COOK, OR MIDDLE EAST AIRWAYS (MFA) OR THROUGH A LOCAL PRIVATE CONTACT. (F) AIRPORT CLEARANCE PROCEDURES ARE NOT DIFFICULT UNLESS ONE IS CARRYING MOVIE FILMS, SEXY MAGAZINES OR FM RADIOS. TRANSPORTATION FROM AIRPORT TO HOTELS AT A FIXED PRICE IS

AVAILABLE THROUGH MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM BOOTH AFTER CLEARING FORMALITIES. PROBLEM ARISES WHEN PRESELECTED HOTEL TURNS OUT TO BE OVERBOOKED. TAXIS CAN GENERALLY CRUISE AROUND, HOWEVER, UNTIL THEY FIND SOMETHING. (H) IN MOST (BUT NOT ALL) CASES, A FIRST-TIME VISITOR IS WELL ADVISED TO MAKE HIS FIRST PRIORITY LINING UP A REPUTABLE PRIVATE SECTOR CONTACT WHO CAN (FOR A FEE OR IN HOPE OF LATER BEING APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE) HELP PHONE FOR APPOINTMENTS, ARANGE TRANSPORTATION, HOST LUNCHES OR DINNERS TO INTRODUCE VISITOR TO KEY BUYERS. OTHERWISE ONE FLOUNDERS. (J) FINALLY, OVER-BOOKING OF FLIGHTS (INCOMING AND OUTGOING) IS NOT UNCOMMON. AND, PARTICULARLY IN THE COOL SEASON--OCTOBER THROUGH MAY-- (WHICH COINCIDES WITH THE PERIOD OF MAXIMUM AVAILABILITY OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING MONEY) DEMAND FOR INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION IS FIERCE.

PROBLEMS PECULIAR TO TRADE MISSIONS

5. GENERALLY THEY ARE SAME AS PARAS 3 AND 4 ON A MAGNIFIED SCALE. PLANE AND HOTEL SPACE, SCARCE FOR ANYONE, ARE THAT MUCH HARDER TO FIND FOR A GROUP. IN ADDITION, IN THE ABSENCE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND GIVEN THE FACT THAT GOI PROPAGANDA ORGANS REGULARLY DESCRIBE USG AS "NUMBER ONE ENEMY OF ARAB NATION", SOME THINGS JUST CANNOT TAKE PLACE IN IRAQ THAT ARE NORMAL ELSEWHERE (A) THERE WILL BE NO PUBLICITY ABOUT SUCH A MISSION IN ANY MEDIA. (B) PUBLICATIONS AND MISSION BROCHURES ARE GIVEN A CLOSER THAN ORDINARY SCRUTINY BY SECURITY PERSONNEL. REFERENCES TO ISRAEL, "PERSIAN GULF, FREEMASONRY CAN DAMPEN EFFECTIVENESS OF MISSION. (C) NO IRAQI GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL WILL ATTEND A RECEPTION FOR MISSION GIVEN BY USINT (BUT THEY MIGHT ATTEND LOW-KEY RECEPTION HOSTED BY REPUTABLE IRAQI PRIVATE PARTY). (D) MOST RPT MOST IRAQI PRIVATE SECTOR PARTIES ARE STILL RELUCTANT TO BE PUBLICLY ASSOCIATED WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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SUCH A MISSION. HOWEVER, ENOUGH FIRST CLASS CONTACTS ARE AVAILABLE THAT THIS IS NOT A DECISIVELY NEGATIVE FACTOR.

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 EB-07 INR-07 A-01 SCA-01

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P 131130Z SEP 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO USDOC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2356

AMEMBASSY ABUDHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

US MISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6. THE PACE OF BUSINESS IN IRAQ IS SLOW RPT SLOW. WORKING DAY IS SHORT. APPOINTMENTS MUST BE MADE BETWEEN 8:30 AM AND 1:00PM. NO ONE CAN ZIP IN AND OUT OF BAGHDAD IN ONE OR TWO DAYS ON HIS FIRST VISIT AND ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING WORTH DOING OR DERSERVING OF USINT'S SUPPORT. MISSIONS MUST RPT MUST SPEND TWICE AS LONG HERE TO BE EFFECTIVE AS THEY MAY BE WILLING TO: FOUR FULL WORKING DAYS. THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE ABOVE AMBIENCE IS THAT A MISSION CAN FEEL IT IS GETTING NOWHERE FOR THE FIRST TWO DAYS AND, GIVEN LACK OF PUBLICITY RATHER DULL NIGHTLIFE AND OCCASIONALLY EXPRESSED POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO US GOVT, GROUP RUNS RISK REACHING END OF STAY IN BAGHDAD WITH A FEELING OF FLATNESS AND LETDOWN. FORTUNATELY, THE BUSINESS PROSPECTS ARE GENERALLY SO GOOD AS TO MAKE UP FOR NEGATIVE UNCLASSIFIED

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FEATURES.

7. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT A BUSINESSMAN NEEDS HELP ON HIS FIRST VISIT TO BAGHDAD. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, DISTINCT LIMITS TO WHAT USINT CAN DO FOR HIM OR FOR A MISSION. (A) WE CATEGORICALLY DO NOT

RPT NOT HAVE ENOUGH SPACE IN PRESENT FACILITIES TO RECEIVE MORE THAN FIVE BUSINESSMEN AT A TIME. HOPEFULLY, WITH FIRM SUPPORT FROM USDOC AND STATE, THIS PROBLEM WILL HAVE BEEN SOLVED BY THE TIME THE FIRST MISSION ARRIVES (REF B). IF, HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT OPENED IN INTERIM A NEW COMMERCIAL OFFICE, IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE FOR USINT TO CLAIM TO BE ABLE TO GIVE MINIMAL ASSISTANCE TO ANY MISSIONS. (B) OUR STAFF IS SMALL: ONE AMERICAN COMMERCIAL OFFICER AND THREE LOCALS AND TWO TELEPHONE LINES. WE CAN SUPPORT A MISSION ONLY BY INDIRECTION, I.E. BY CALLING AND MONITORING HELP OF REPUTABLE PRIVATE SECTOR IRAQIS. WE CANNOT BY OURSELVES MAKE INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS FOR ALL MEMBERS, MAKE SURE THEY REACH THEIR DESTINATIONS, ETC.

WHAT USINT WILL DO

8. AGAINST THE ABOVE BACKGROUND (AND ASSUMING WE GET PROPER OFFICE SPACE BEFORE JANUARY) USINT AGREES TO DO THE FOLLOWING FOR ANY USDOC-APPROVED MISSION:

(A) WE WILL KEEP MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) AND ECONOMY (MINECON) INFORMED OF MISSIONS AND WILL, AS REQUIRED, SUPPORT APPLICATIONS FOR VISAS TO BE ISSUED IN STATES. FOR MISSIONS LED BY GOVERNORS OR LT-GOVERNORS WE WILL TRY TO ARRANGE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY ESCORT OFFICER.

(B) WE WILL SUPPORT THROUGH MFA AND MINECON APPLICATIONS BY GOVS/LT GOVS TO CALL ON MINISTERS OR DEPUTY MINISTERS.

(C) WE WILL MEET MISSIONS ON ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT AND ASSIST THROUGH FORMALITIES (NORMALLY WE CAN ARRANGE THAT THEIR BAGGAGE NOT RPT NOT BE OPENED).

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(D) WE WILL MAKE SPACE AVAILABLE (IF WE HAVE IT) TO MISSION FOR A WORKING HEADQUARTERS AND COORDINATION POINT. WE WILL, TO EXTENT POSSIBLE, MAKE LOCAL STAFF AVAILABLE TO ESCORT TO KEY CALLS.

(E) WE WILL HOST A RECEPTION FOR MISSION TO MEET LEADING FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN, SELECTED IRAQI BUSINESSMEN, LAWYERS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS.

(F) WE WILL RECOMMEND EITHER BY SELECTION ON A ROTATING BASIS OR SIMPLY BY GIVING A LIST TO EACH PROSPECTIVE MISSION UP TO SIX PRIVATE SECTOR

"EXPEDITERS" WHO FOR A FEE OR FREE WILL WORK WITH ADVANCE MAN TO ARRANGE HOTEL ROOMS, LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AND A DETAILED SET OF APPOINTMENTS FOR EACH MISSION MEMBER. THESE WILL BE GOOD, REPUTABLE, WELL CONNECTED BUSINESSMEN.

WHAT MISSIONS MUST AGREE TO DO

9. AT THE SAME TIME THE MISSION MUST DO THE FOLLOWING:

(A) SEND AN ADVANCE MAN TO BAGHDAD AT LEAST FOUR WORKING DAYS BEFORE MISSION ARRIVAL: TO MEET LOCAL EXPEDITER AND WORK WITH HIM TO NAIL DOWN HOTELS, TRANSPORTATION, AND APPOINTMENTS.

(B) SPEND FOUR FULL WORKING DAYS IN BAGHDAD.

(C) PAY FOR USINT RECEPTION

(D) HOLD USINT BLAMELESS IF THEY ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH LOCAL "EXPEDITER" WE RECOMMEND ON ROTATING BASIS OR WHICH THEY SELECT FROM LIST WE SEND THEM. NOTE: WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND MISSION HIRE SUCH AN EXPEDITER FOR 1,000 DOLLARS PLUS EXPENSES. BUT IF PREFER CHOOSE OTHERWISE, WE CAN FIND GOOD PEOPLE WHO WILL WORK FOR FREE IN ORDER TO INTRODUCE SELVES TO MEMBERS AND HAVE FIRST CRACK AT BEING APPOINTED LOCAL REPS. MISSION BECOMES OBVIOUSLY MORE

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"OBLIGATED" TO EXPEDITERS WHO DONATE SERVICES AND THIS IS NOT MODE WE PREFER.

(E) BE GUIDED BY USINT AND USDOC ON CONTENTS OF MATERIALS IN MISSION PROMOTIONAL BROCHURES (SEE PARA FIVE ABOVE).

10. ACTION REQUESTED: USDOC PASS THIS MESSAGE OR GIVE ITS GIST TO ANY MISSIONS PROPOSED FOR BAGHDAD AND MAKE IT CLEAR THAT IF OUR CONDITIONS ARE ACCEPTED GOOD RESULTS ARE PROBABLE, BUT GIVEN OUR STAFF LIMITATIONS AND THE SLOW PACE OF BUSINESS HERE, WE WOULD BE ACTING IRRESPONSIBLY IF WE DID NOT FIRMLY INSIST ON THE CONDITIONS IN PARA NINE. WHEN WE HAVE BIGGER STAFF AND/OR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, WE WILL BE HAPPY TO REVIEW SITUATION.

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